

In the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1, 11, 21, 22, 31 and 32, all as shown below. Applicant reserves the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

1. (Currently Amended) A collaboration hub for use with a collaboration system for handling messages, comprising:

a transport for receiving messages from participants and sending messages to other participants;

a router that validates each message received from a participant at the transport, examines the message to determine which other participant or participants the message should be delivered to, and stores the message for subsequent delivery [[by]] via the transport to those participants;

a scheduler that schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router, and from the router to the transport;

a manager that manages the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub; and,

a repository that stores management data, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.

2. (Previously Canceled)

3. (Previously Amended) The collaboration hub of claim 1 further comprising a decoder that decodes messages received from said participants, wherein the decoder plugged between the transport and the scheduler.

4. (Previously Amended) The collaboration hub of claim 1 further comprising an encoder that encodes messages sent to other participants, wherein the encoder is plugged between the scheduler and the transport.

5. (Previously Amended) The collaboration hub of claim 1 further comprising router logic plug-ins that determine said other participants to whom messages should be sent, wherein the router logic plug-ins are plugged between the scheduler and the router.

6. (Previously Amended) The collaboration hub of claim 1 further comprising filter logic plug-ins that determine whether to send a message to said other participants, wherein the filter logic plug-ins are plugged in between the router and the scheduler.

7. (Previously Canceled).

8. (Previously Amended) The collaboration hub of claim 1 further comprising business logic plug-ins that provide support for messages of various business protocols among the participants, wherein said business logic plug-ins are plugged in between the scheduler and the router.

9. (Previously Amended) The collaboration hub of claim 8 wherein said business logic plug-ins include a RosettaNet plug-in.

10. (Previously Canceled).

11. (Previously Amended) A method for transferring messages between participants in a collaboration system, comprising the steps of:

receiving messages via a transport from participants and sending messages to other participants;

validating messages received at the transport by a router, including examining the message to determine which other participant or participants the message should be delivered to;

storing messages by the router for delivery by the transport;

scheduling the flow of messages from the transport to the router and further scheduling messages from the router to the transport;

managing the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub, wherein said components comprise the transport, the router and the scheduler; and,

storing management data in a repository, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.

12. (Previously Canceled).

13. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of decoding messages received from participants by a decoder, wherein the decoder is plugged between the transport and the scheduler.

14. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of encoding messages sent to said other participants, wherein the encoder is plugged between the scheduler and the transport.

15. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of determining participants to whom messages should be sent by using router logic plug-ins, wherein router logic plug-ins are plugged between the scheduler and router.

16. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of determining whether to send a message to said other participants by using filter logic plug-ins, wherein said filter logic plug-ins are plugged in between the router and the scheduler.

17. (Previously Canceled).

18. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 11 further comprising the step of providing support for messages of various business protocols among participants by using business logic plug-ins, wherein said business logic plug-ins are plugged in between the scheduler and the router.

19. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said messages of various business protocols includes a RosettaNet format message.

20. (Previously Canceled).

21. (Currently Amended) A collaboration hub for use with a collaboration system, comprising:
a transport that receives messages from participants and ~~sending~~ sends the messages to other participants, using an extensible collaboration protocol, wherein said extensible collaboration protocol provides ability to specify both information and business protocol;

a router that validates messages received at the transport, examines the message to determine which other participant or participants the message should be delivered to, and ~~storing~~ stores messages for delivery by the transport; and

a scheduler that schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router, and from the router to the transport.

22. (Currently Amended) A method for transferring messages between participants in a collaboration system, comprising the steps of:

receiving messages via a transport from participants and sending the messages to other participants, using an extensible collaboration protocol, wherein said extensible collaboration protocol provides ability to specify both information and business protocol;

validating messages received at the transport by a router, including examining the message to determine which other participant or participants the message should be delivered to;

storing messages by the router for delivery by the transport; and,

scheduling the flow of messages from the transport to the router, and from the router to the transport.

23. (Previously Presented) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 further comprising said manager
managing the flow of messages between the transport and participants.

24. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 11 further comprising the step of managing the flow of messages between the transport and participants using said manager.
25. (Previously Presented) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 wherein said messages are transferred among said participants asynchronously.
26. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 11 wherein said messages are transferred among said participants asynchronously.
27. (Previously Presented) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 wherein said transport is configured to receive concurrent messages from participants.
28. (Previously Presented) A collaboration hub according to claim 1 wherein said transport is configured to send concurrent messages to participants.
29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 11 wherein said transport is configured to receive concurrent messages from participants.
30. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 11 wherein said transport is configured to send concurrent messages to participants.
31. (Currently Amended) A collaboration hub for use with a collaboration system, comprising: a transport that receives messages from a first participant and ~~sending~~ sends the messages to a second participant, using an extensible collaboration protocol, wherein said extensible collaboration protocol provides ability to specify both information and business protocol;

a router that validates said messages received at the transport, examines the message to determine which other participant or participants the message should be delivered to, and storing said messages for delivery by the transport;

a scheduler that schedules the flow of messages from the transport to the router and, from the router to the transport;

a manager for managing the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub; and,

a repository for storing management data, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.

32. (Currently Amended) A method for transferring messages between participants in a collaboration system, comprising the steps of:

receiving messages via a transport from a first participant and sending messages to a second participant, using an extensible collaboration protocol, wherein said extensible collaboration protocol provides ability to specify both information and business protocol;

validating messages received at the transport by a router, including examining the message to determine which other participant or participants the message should be delivered to;

storing messages by the router for delivery by the transport;

scheduling the flow of messages between the router and the transport;

managing the flow of messages across components of collaboration hub; and,

storing management data in a repository, wherein said management data is used by components of the collaboration hub to handle said messages.